



First Press

Weekly Newsletter

August 23, 2026

First Presbyterian Church

Our Pastor

Rev. Dr. Helen Hutchison

Email: helen@firstpreslawrence.org

Helen will be in the office Monday through Thursday.

Our Mission

We are a community of Christ's disciples who celebrate God's inclusive love by ministering to one another and the world.

Church Office Hours

9 am to 3 pm Monday through Friday.

Welcome!

We encourage everyone to come as you are, be who you are, and be in community with us! Whether you are joining us virtually or in-person, as a long-time member or a first-time guest, we are happy to have you with us anytime! If you are new to First Presbyterian Church, please let us know you are here by signing the **Friendship Pad**: If you are worshipping with us online either live or recorded please **email us at** linda@firstpreslawrence.org letting us know you joined us in worship. We look forward to getting to know you. If you are interested in membership at FPC please talk with Pastor Helen.

Cards of Encouragement: Blue cards found in the pew rack ~ please put in offering plate and we will send them out in the mail.

Children Sunday School

• Sunday School Classes for Children

- *The theme is Welcome All!*

Welcome All is the way we are describing the faith practice of hospitality. It is the idea of being intentional and authentic as we offer a genuine welcome to all of God's people - both stranger and friend. When we are intentional about welcoming all, we are affirming the worth of all of God's people. A commitment to opening our hearts, our homes, our churches, and our capacity for friendship and community too, not only those who are like us, but also those who are different from us is at the very heart of the practice of hospitality. Nancy Hodges and Joan Golden will teach for August:

- 8/23 – *Who's that Stranger?* Luke 24:13-24
- 8/23 – *That's Just My Style!* Luke 10:38-42
- 8/30 - *Welcome.....All?* Luke 7:36-50

Adult and Youth Sunday School

On August 23 Jim Woelfel begins a series on *Varieties of Unbelief: Thomas Henry Huxley, George Eliot, Bertran Russell, Simone de Beauvoir*. The American philosopher William James entitled his classic study of religion *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Over the centuries skepticism about and outright rejection of theistic beliefs have also been expressed in a variety of ways of thinking and sensibilities. In this series I will present four modern agnostic and atheistic thinkers

and writers whose differences illustrate what I am calling the varieties of unbelief. Unbelief can range from brisk rejection and sharp criticism of Christianity and belief in God, at one end of the spectrum, to a deep sense of the mystery of human existence and a poignantly sympathetic appreciation of faith at the other.

- On **August 30** there will be a one-time opportunity to learn some basic information about solar panels in a class called ***Solar Panels for Beginners***. Mark Shiflett will demonstrate how solar panels work and their importance to us and our world.
- On **September 6**, Jim Woelfel's class will continue through September 20

Youth Activities and Opportunities –

- **Sunday, August 30** is our annual **Back to School Bowling Night!** Join us and bring a friend to Royal Crest Lanes at 9th and Iowa from 3 to 5 pm. All are welcome to join for a game or two. The church will cover the cost of shoes and one game for each youth. Please have money for snacks and the arcade if needed or desired.

Summer Sermon Series is called Epic Meltdowns in the Bible and How God Responds. It may help us in our own meltdowns or meltdowns around us to know that God Forgives, God Waits, God Humbles, God Protects, God Instructs and God Provides Help.

Pastor Helen's Monday Class will continue their study of the History of Religion in the United States on Mondays at 2 pm in the Fireside Room. Everyone is welcome to join in the discussion.

Roots of the Land, Food of the People



In our ongoing effort to learn about and be allies to the Indigenous people in our community, on September 20 we have planned a worship service that focuses on celebrating the Indigenous connection to Kansas including communion with fry bread and then will continue with lunch in fellowship hall. This meal will be catered by Melissa Garret of Wadulisi's Contemporary Indigenous Foods to provide us with an authentic traditional meal. The meal will include hearty bison chili, three sisters corn dish with blue corn chips, traditional fry bread, slow-roasted seasonal

vegetables and grape dumplings. The lunch includes Melissa sharing stories of the importance of food and tradition in the indigenous community. You must purchase a ticket for this event. Tickets will be on sale in the Narthex. Tickets are limited. Cost is \$20 for one, \$40 for two, and \$50 for a family. You **MUST** have a ticket to attend.

SCAM artists!

Unfortunately, from time to time, we become the victims of scam artists. They send emails or texts they hope look like Pastor Helen's email and ask for money or gift cards or other things they try to take away from you! Please check the sender's email. They are usually from a Gmail account. Helen's email is from the church – firstpreslawrence.org. Please don't be taken by their pleas for help. We will **NEVER** ask for money in this way. We have funds to help people. And we are doing that. If you feel a need to help others in our community, please make a donation to the Deacon Love Fund. Just don't be scammed by a false email.

Handbell Ringers Needed!

The Westminster Ringers Handbell Choir is looking for new ringers for both treble and bass bells, beginning Monday, August 31. Rehearsals are held on Mondays, from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The group regularly participates in the 10:30 am worship service on the third Sunday of each month, September through May, with occasional additional services throughout the year.

FPC Westminster Ringers bell choir will celebrate 50 years of ringing in 2027! If you would like to be part of this dynamic and fun group of musicians, contact director Carol Fleegeer at carolfleegeer@yahoo.com or 225-235-9285. We are looking forward to having YOU join us!

Chancel Choir begins rehearsals on Wednesday, September 2, 2026. They meet every Wednesday from 7 to about 8 pm in the Sanctuary. If you enjoyed singing this summer, you might consider joining the choir during the school year. Everyone is welcome to join the choir!

Welcome to our new members Bonnie Briscoe and Nancy Toland. The Session approved their membership to FPC at their August 11th meeting. Bonnie is a returning member of FPC who found the ministry of Pastor Jim Dunkin especially supportive following her husband's terminal cancer diagnosis and surgery. She found the congregation very welcoming and the church beautiful and accessible. She found it easy to become involved in choir and education classes.

Nancy Toland and her husband, Clyde, moved to Lawrence to be closer to family. Her husband had a major stroke sixteen years ago and Nancy is the primary caregiver. She has been attending for several months, often with her granddaughter, Caroline Toland, who is a student at KU. We are excited to welcome both of these women to our congregation. Look for more information and how to contact them on our "New Member" bulletin board across from the Sanctuary.



Family Promise – You are invited to a **Ribbon Cutting** for the new six apartment building called **Promise Heights** on **August 27th from 4-6 pm**. The address is 909 Tennessee Street. A tour of the six-plex will also be available. The six-plex has been built by Form & Function and has been partially furnished by Living Spaces.

You are also invited to the 18th Annual Auction Party for Family Promise on **September 20th from 5-8 pm** at Maceli's. There will be both live and silent auctions. We at FPC often put together some baskets of gift cards for the silent auction. I will be in the Narthex beginning on August 30th to collect your donations of either gift cards or money for me to purchase gift cards.

You as the FPC congregation have always been generous in supporting this Family Promise Fund Raiser. Family Promise of Lawrence – changing the course for families facing a housing crisis.



Thank you for your continuing love and caring for our community!
Blessings, Lois Dutcher

You're Invited
to the 18th Annual
Auction Party & Golf Tournament


**Changing the course for
families facing a housing crisis**

September 20th 5pm-8pm @ Maceli's
September 21st 12pm @ Lawrence Country Club

- Impact Stories
- Live + Silent Auction
- Gourmet Food
- Fund a need and Wine Pull
- Friendly Golf Competition
- Cocktails + Mocktails

Come to one or both! Scan for tickets



There's no place like home!



The PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN's FALL GATHERING will be held in the Fellowship Hall at FPC on Saturday, September 12, 2026, 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided.



DCCCA

Julie Boyle, DCCCA Community & Donor Relations Manager

From grassroots Lawrence beginnings to its growth into a statewide nonprofit agency, DCCCA continues to provide social & community services that improve the safety, health, & well-being of children, adults, families, & communities.



- The program will be presented by Julie Boyle, DCCCA Community & Donor Relations Manager. She will tell us about the new DCCCA Hope House project.
- Service Project: Donations to DCCCA
- Hosted by Eve Circle
- All women of the church are invited!!! Please sign up to attend on the church friendship registry or the sign-up sheet in the Narthex to let us know that you will be there (just so we know how many places to set). If you forget to sign up, come anyway. There will be plenty of food and places to sit. Bring a friend to join in the fun!!!

We look forward to seeing you!!!

